



Working on the inside...
Succeeding on the outside

Montana Correctional Enterprises (MCE) Advisory Council Minutes

350 Conley Lake Rd. – Deer Lodge, MT 59722

July 9, 2008

REVISED

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. David Yarlott, Peggy Grimes, Gerald Bender, and Brian Sheridan

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS (DOC) MEMBERS PRESENT: Gayle Lambert, MCE Administrator; Andrew Olcott, Fiscal Manager; Johnal Holst, Industries Director, Larry Burke, Vocational Education Director; Bill Dabney, Agriculture Director, Joe Mihelic, Food Factory Director and Gail Boese, MCE Administrative Officer

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Senator Kim Gillan, Representative Mike Jopek, Cheryl Moore-Gough, and Mike Monforton

GUESTS: Gary Hamel, Department of Corrections

The MCE Advisory Council meeting was held at the DOC Training Center and was called to order by MCE Administrator Gayle Lambert. Gayle explained that Kim Gillan would be unable to attend as she had taken a fall and injured her knee.

The minutes of the March 26, 2008 meeting were accepted as written.

Gary Hamel

Gary Hamel from the Department of Corrections addressed the council regarding inmate population projections. He stated that the drop in population is mainly due to placing inmates in alternative areas.

Director Ferriter

Director Ferriter informed the Council that the Department of Corrections Advisory Council endorsed a definition of recidivism that mirrors the one used by the national correctional organization. This does not change the department's basic description. It is still an offender who returns to prison for any reason within three years of being released. It is simply a movement toward a single national definition of recidivism that will give us a clearer return rate and a true recidivism rate.

Director Ferriter also explained that the makeup of our inmates for our recidivism study is different than previous studies. 93% of our population has addictive problems. MSP also has over 400 sex offenders.

Gayle Lambert

Gayle stated that MCE is working with the Information Technology staff in Helena on a recidivism study for MCE. This will tell us how we are doing in our division.

MCA's

Gayle distributed and reviewed a handout of the proposed changes to the Montana Codes Annotated (MCA's) for MCE. The codes are 53-30-131, 53-30-132 and 53-30-133.

Legislative Audit

The legislative audit is not yet complete. This will be sent to the Council when completed.

Cardboard recycling

Gayle explained that she has been approached by a local businessman in regards to cardboard recycling and this is also something that Advisory member Gerald Bender had brought up at the last meeting.

Gayle stated that a meeting will be held in the near future with administrative staff to see how we can help the city of Deer Lodge with their recycling program.

We are also putting together a five-year solid waste reduction plan.

Work Dorm Expansion

Gayle stated that the Work Dorm expansion should be complete by November 2008. All inmates that work outside the single fence will live at the Work Dorm. This means that a higher profile inmate may be living outside the fence. The risks are being reviewed and new security measures will be taken. Two more security officers will be hired to strictly work for the ranch and outside work areas and a new monitoring system "Morse Watchman" has been implemented in the housing unit.

Gayle also stated that for extra security, a vehicle monitoring system has been purchased which will track inmate vehicles.

Gayle reported that MCE will be hosting the Western Regional Correctional Industries Conference in Helena next year. The dates will be August 31-September 3, 2009 and it will be held at the Great Northern Hotel in Helena.

Director's Reports

Andrew Olcott, Fiscal Manager

Andrew reported that he has been working on fiscal year end. He also reported that MCE received a grant for a biomass burner.

Johnal Holst, Industries Director

Johnal reported that due to inflation, product costing and pricing has been a challenge. There is also more competition from other countries.

Johnal also discussed two new PIE programs; Phillips Environmental and Quake Industries. The Phillips Environmental program packages biodegradable waste bags and Quake Industries is a rifle sling assembly program. He stated that Thomas Tooling may be a new PIE industry by the end of the month.

Joe Mihelic, Food Factory Director

Joe stated that all of the food factory staff positions have been filled. He has also been working with the long range building consultants regarding expansion of the food factory.

Larry Burke, Vocational Education Director

Larry stated that all of the vocational education staff positions have been filled. He also stated that he is reviewing a proposal from MVM to work 4-10 hour days.

Larry informed the council that the high side vocational education program, which was suspended in January due to security computer issues, is now up and running. The supervisor is split half-time on the high side and half-time on the low side.

Larry stated that the two driver's license coordinators are now CJIN certified and will be working on inmate licenses and inmate ID's.

He also stated that the CDL instructor position is still vacant but 10 renewal licenses have been issued. Larry informed the Council that work at the Cannery has been suspended since January due to employee health reasons.

Larry also reported that five staff are working towards obtaining their boiler licenses.

Bill Dabney, Agriculture Director

Bill stated that calving went well. He stated he is planning a cattle and dairy cow sale in the near future.

Bill also stated that the Taylor Reservoir gabion basket project should be completed this year and that lumber processing is doing well and is now working on a pallet project.

Bill also discussed the timber sales due to beetle kill.

Advisory Board Recommendations

Peggy Grimes

Peggy Grimes deferred until the next meeting to make any recommendations but did concur with Brian Sheridan that it is important for industries to market their products.

Brian Sheridan

Brian Sheridan thought it might be beneficial for Larry Burke to visit his facility in Missoula. There may also be equipment that he can loan to us for training purposes.

Gerald Bender

Gerald supports MCE involvement with a recycling project.

David Yarlott

Dr. Yarlott submitted a brief synopsis of his observations and thoughts.

Gayle asked the council's recommendations on how to proceed with new members to the Board. After a brief discussion, it was suggested that perhaps an orientation meeting may be helpful for new members to bring them up to speed and help them understand what MCE is all about.

Johnal asked the Board's help in how he should advertise or market his industry products. After considerable discussion, it was recommended that advertisement was probably not a good recourse, but marketing our products is necessary. The Board could also see no reason why we have just one dealer in each area, especially if that dealer is not bringing in any sales for us. We need to pursue the market and educate others on MCE and our products. Another recommendation by the Board was to do a feasibility study for industries.

Gail Boese will e-mail the dealer contract to the board members for any recommendations. Johnal is also working on a marketing plan.

Public Comment

Director Ferriter

Director Ferriter discussed the following:

1. The lack of jobs in other facilities which needs to be addressed and the possibility of looking into an industry with non-profit organizations.
2. Red trees in Montana – beetle kill. The importance of MCE managing their forests and the importance of training the logging industry to manage forests.
3. The importance of MCE to the overall success of the Department.

Next meeting

1. The next meeting will be scheduled in October. Gail Boese will work with the committee to schedule our next meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:30 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Gail M. Boese
Gail Boese, Administrative Officer